

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

QUARTERLY

News Letter

Published for its members by
The Book Club of California, 1125 Russ Bldg., San Francisco
Edited by Oscar Lewis

Winter 1943

Volume X	CONTENTS	Numbers 3-4
A Review of 1943 — Guardians of the Pacific — Elected to Membership — "Printing for Pleasure" — W. R. K. Young — Notes on Publications.		

A REVIEW OF 1943

THE YEAR NOW drawing to a close is the thirty-first in the Club's history and the second under the abnormal conditions of World War II. During the year the Club has followed a procedure outlined to the members last spring; that is, it has maintained its usual activities, although these have necessarily not been on the same scale or with the same frequency as in former years. The aim has been to continue functioning during the war period and to preserve the continuity of its activities in order that when peace returns it can resume normal operations with a minimum of reorganization and without undue delay.

2 The Book Club of California

This aim has been faithfully carried out. Details of the activities of 1943 will be found on the following pages.

In some quarters surprise has been expressed that the Club is not sharing in the current wartime boom. It is pointed out that publishing houses and the retail book trade are enjoying extremely brisk business; why then, it is added, should the Club not be participating in this general prosperity? The answer lies in the purposes of the Club itself and in the nature of its activities. It is not a commercial organization and the making of a profit on its publications has never been one of its aims. Its income is derived, not from profit on publications, but from the dues of the members; therefore it cannot compensate for higher operating costs by increasing the price of what it sells, the usual commercial procedure. The only way to augment its income would be to add new members or to increase the dues of those already on the roll. Under present conditions neither expedient is likely to be very productive. New members are hard to get in wartime and to increase dues at a time when Club activities have to be held to a minimum would be neither just nor wise. In view of all this the only sound course would seem to be to continue the program now in force; that is, to give the members as much as can safely be given in view of diminished income, to make such additions as may be possible to the membership roll, and to await patiently the return of normal times.

•••••

W. R. K. YOUNG

THE CLUB REGRETS to announce the death, on September 28, 1943, of William R. K. Young, charter member of the Club, its second President, and for many years

a valued member of the Board of Directors. Mr. Young was one of the small but enthusiastic group of collectors who, in 1912, brought the Club into being and assiduously nursed it through the critical first years. His term as President covered the years from 1914 to 1925 and the substantial progress made during that period was in large measure due to his unfailing interest, his generous support of Club activities and the soundness of his judgment in all matters typographical. A native of Prince Edward Island, Canada, Mr. Young came to San Francisco at an early age and speedily made his influence felt not only in business circles but in the city's cultural life as well. He remained a member of the Board of Directors until 1929, when growing infirmities persuaded him to step aside; it is gratifying to know, however, that he retained his interest in the Club's welfare, and his support of its activities, to the end.



ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

THE FOLLOWING NAMES have been added to the roll since the appearance of the last issue of the quarterly:

NAME		SPONSOR
Earl F. Cook	Seattle, Wash.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Donald R. Dickey	San Francisco, Calif.	Flodden W. Heron
Miss Helen Harding	Berkeley, Calif.	Oscar Lewis
Donald F. Hermann	Erie, Pa.	Oscar Lewis
Alexander M. Levy	Beverly Hills, Calif.	Lessing Rosenthal
J. Brown Maloney	Fresno, Calif.	Miss Eleanor McClatchy

During the first eleven months of 1943 the Club sustained a net loss of fourteen members. The membership now stands at approximately 475, including honorary and life members, of whom there are about thirty. As has often been pointed out in the past it is highly desirable that the membership be kept at or near the maximum,

4 The Book Club of California

which is 600. This is even more true today. New members are of course desired so long as vacancies exist, but those who join now will be accorded a particularly hearty welcome, and their sponsors as well.



GUARDIANS OF THE PACIFIC

“TALES AND PARABLES OF OLD CHINA,” Number Two of “Guardians of the Pacific,” the Club’s ninth series of keepsakes, is in process of completion and will be sent out to the members early in December. The remaining four parts (Russia, New Zealand, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies) will follow as promptly as the hazards of war, plus manpower, paper and kindred shortages, will permit.

The China booklet has the twin merit of fitting neatly into the pattern of the series and at the same time of standing on its own feet as regards readability, timeliness and intrinsic value. It is an appropriate tribute to a brave and sorely battered ally. It does for China what Robert Lawson’s “The Romance of the Swag” (Number One of the series) did for Australia, and what it is hoped the remaining booklets will do for their respective countries; that is, it suggests something of the qualities in a people that have rendered them inattentive to the advocates of co-prosperity spheres and stubbornly determined not to permit themselves to be permanently enslaved.

“Tales and Parables of Old China” consists of Lin Yutang’s selection and translation of eight fables of old Cathay, some familiar, some known only to scholars, but all pointed, packed with human values and by no means devoid of humor. They are reprinted in the Club’s edition by permission of the publisher and the translator. Wallace


JOHN BIDWELL
JOSIAH ROYCE



*A Letter From Mary
Clement Leavitt To Bidwell
On Behalf of Royce*

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO: 1943

HERE WE GET A PEEK BEHIND THE SCENES at a well-known and controversial history in the process of being written. It is *California, From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco; a Study of American Character*. It was published in '86. The author, Josiah Royce, was born in 1855 in Grass Valley, California. His book was disturbing to the admirers of General Fremont. "I am not the one to blame if the result is unfavorable," said Royce to critics. His contention was that Fremont's misguided zeal caused needless strife between the Californians and the United States.

John Bidwell, need one say, arrived in California in 1841 and was conspicuous in state and national affairs until his death at Chico in 1900. Mrs. Mary Clement Leavitt was a Women's Christian Temperance Union lecturer. The original letter herewith making its first appearance in print is in the collection of Bidwell papers at Sutter's Fort in Sacramento.  Carroll D. Hall, Curator of Sutter's Fort Historical Museum.

Los Gatos, Santa Clara Co.

Feb. 5, 1884

General Bidwell,

Dear Sir:

A young friend of mine, Josiah Royce, a native Californian, for a period of two years, holding the position of Prof. of Philosophy in Harvard Col. Cambridge Mass. is writing a history of Cal. as a state. This he is doing at the request of Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Mr. Royce is a young man of rare ability, and will doubtless add to California's laurels by this work.

I know your knowledge of the early times would be almost a history of itself. I therefore ask, and hope it is not a presumption to do so, if you will give Mr. Royce some facts more or less numerous, which will help him in his work. Such as bear upon the religious, moral, intellectual developement of the country, how civilization was transported to these wilds, would be peculiarly acceptable. The very interesting circumstances you related to me in regard to the providential withholding of your discovery of gold, till after our

flag floated over the land, are well worth preserving.

Recent writers have written in a strain implying that there was no pure family life in those days, which was not true, as Mr. Royce's mother a cultivated Christian lady a "forty-niner" testifies, as well as others. Mr. Royce would be glad of help to present the right side of that question, as well as it can be.

If time and inclination allow, whatever you can do will be very gratefully rec'd by Mr. Royce. Direct to Josiah Royce Los Gatos Cal.

Please give my love to dear Mrs. Bidwell, and say to her I am quite rested, and again doing my utmost to get tired out.

Very truly, with esteem

Your friend

Mary Clement Leavitt



THE PRESS OF LEWIS & DOROTHY ALLEN



Kibbee has given this material a typographical setting worthy of its other qualities and he had also contributed a graceful and informative foreword. The booklet is agreeable to the mind, the eye and the hand. The decorations are specially drawn Chinese characters, printed in Chinese red, and any member ambitious to learn the Chinese numerals can make a good start by studying the folios on the lower margins of the pages; there are no other page numbers.

Parts Three and Four are in preparation. Their subjects are Russia and the Dutch East Indies and the printers will be, respectively, the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco, and the Eucalyptus Press, Mills College. The series will end some time in 1944, possibly to coincide with the end of certain over-ambitious little men of Tokyo who unwittingly brought this project (and some others less commendable) into being.



“PRINTING FOR PLEASURE”

WHEN THE CLUB early this year announced that a plan was afoot to issue for the members a series of small and attractive specimens of the work of Western printers, the belief was expressed that this would prove an interesting and desirable innovation, particularly at a time when the Club's more formal activities are unavoidably slowed down by the war. As outlined this spring, the plan was for the Club to act merely as a distributing agency: the printers themselves were to choose and edit the texts, design and print the leaflets and present the finished product to the members. The theory behind this apparently reckless generosity was simply this: Every so often there comes a time when even the most practical-

6 The Book Club of California

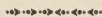
mindful printer feels an urge to do a job solely for the pleasure he gets out of it. Either he comes across some bit of writing that, because of its interest or timeliness or for any one of a number of other reasons, seems to him well worth passing on to others; or it may be that he has time on his hands and an ambition to work out some interesting typographical problem. In either case (so the theory goes) the specimen duly materializes and the Club co-operates by forwarding copies to the members.

The project was given a general title, Printers' Leaflets, and Leaflet Number One ("The English Admirals," by R. L. S., contributed by The Windsor Press, now regrettably defunct) was sent out as visual evidence of the sort of material and treatment the sponsors had in mind. The members definitely liked both the idea and the sample. The Club received a variety of favorable comments, as well as half a dozen requests for additional copies of "The English Admirals," which last it was fortunately able to fill.

Herewith is Leaflet Number Two: "John Bidwell—Josiah Royce: A Letter From Mary Clement Leavitt . . ." with a note by Carroll D. Hall, Curator of the Sutter's Fort Museum at Sacramento. The leaflet is the gift of Lewis and Dorothy Allen, a product of their active private press in San Francisco. Further details of materials and treatment follow: The paper is Worthy Hand & Arrow all-rag. The quill pen ornament is from a wood engraving by Mallette Dean. The type is Bulmer: 10-point italic and roman for the text and 18-point for the title lines. The type is of course hand-set and the printing was done on a hand-press. The donors add this note: "Being a letter from a lady, we endeavored to keep the typography delicate, with a December touch in the color

combination." The edition: 500 copies.

Leaflet Number Three is in preparation, with distribution planned for early in 1944, and there are others in prospect. Hint to collectors: Save your Printers' Leaflets; if all goes well the full run will one day constitute a varied and uncommonly interesting survey of the work of a considerable group of Western presses, amateur and professional—all done in informal (and generous) mood.



NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS

The titles currently available are listed below, and an order-card is enclosed for your convenience in ordering.

AN ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO CALIFORNIA IN 1826-27 by Captain F. W. Beechey. With a foreword by Edith M. Coulter and four color lithographs. The first reprinting of the California section of Beechey's famous "Narrative." The Grabhorn Press. 350 copies. \$8.00.

BALLADS OF ELDORADO. Selected, with a foreword, by Earle V. Weller. The best, and most readable, of California ballads, printed by the Ward Ritchie Press and strikingly illustrated by Barse Miller. 300 copies, \$3.00.

FIRE AND OTHER POEMS by D. H. Lawrence. With an introduction by Robinson Jeffers and a note by Frieda Lawrence. A first edition by Lawrence and Jeffers and a distinguished recent example of Grabhorn Press printing. 300 copies. \$3.50.

CATO'S MORAL DISTICHES. A facsimile of a rare pamphlet printed by Benjamin Franklin, with text by Carl Van Doren and a leaf of Franklin printing. The Ward Ritchie Press. 300 copies. \$3.00.

AN ORIGINAL ISSUE OF THE SPECTATOR: An essay on Addison, Steele and the Spectator by Eric Partridge, with a genuine issue of this famous 18th century paper bound in each copy. The Grabhorn Press. 450 copies. \$6.00.

8 The Book Club of California

In addition to the above, the following earlier Club publications are available, at one-third their original prices:

THE BEAUTIES OF BOSWELL, by Thomas Rowlandson. With a foreword by Flodden W. Heron. A reproduction, in colors, of this famous series of caricatures, first published in 1786. Ten plates, printed by The Grabhorn Press and contained in a portfolio. 250 copies. \$6.00.

THE HELMET OF MAMBRINO by Clarence King, with an introduction by Francis P. Farquhar. A tale of Spain, a barber's basin, and Don Horatio of San Francisco. University of California Press. 300 copies. \$.67.

ODES AND SONNETS by Clark Ashton Smith. Introduction by George Sterling. Selections from the work of a young California poet of great talent. Taylor & Taylor. 300 copies. \$1.00.

LILITH by George Sterling. A long narrative poem that ranks with the finest of Sterling's productions. Taylor & Taylor. 350 copies. \$2.00.

CONTINENT'S END: An Anthology of Contemporary California poets. The best of modern California poetry, selected by George Sterling, Genevieve Taggard and James Rorty. John Henry Nash. 600 copies. \$5.00.

THE FINAL STANZA by Lewis Browne. An unpublished chapter of Browne's life of Heine. Johnck & Seeger. 300 copies, signed by the author. \$1.17.

THE PERSISTENCE OF POETRY by Witter Bynner. Poetry's place in the modern world. The Windsor Press. 300 copies, signed by the author. \$2.00.

SIR WALTER SCOTT. Essays on the novelist by John Buchan and William V. Van Antwerp. Johnck & Seeger. 300 copies. \$1.00.

BIERCE AND THE POE HOAX by Carroll D. Hall. Introduction by Carey McWilliams. A spirited retelling of an amusing episode in San Francisco journalism. The Windsor Press. 250 copies. \$1.00.